



# RURAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT BY GENERATING LIVELIHOOD OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH SKILL DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

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## ABSTRACT

Poverty alleviation has been a basic objective of Indian economy since independence. To alleviate poverty it is necessary to generate income which could only be done through generating more and more employment opportunities. Keeping in mind the increasing pressure of youth in mind it is necessary to provide necessary skills which can generate employment to ease out the stress on the job markets. It is a need of time to address the problem of poverty through generating skill oriented employment base which will not only improve employment scenario in the nation but also lead to sustainable employment opportunity in the states. To promote rural sustainable development in India and in the state it is necessary to skill and train people and youth to develop the ability of innovation which will help in empowering people. This could only be done with the help of educating and training with proper skills keeping in mind the idea of sustainable development. This process will not only strengthen an individual but also help in building a strong workforce in the nation which will lead to achieve sustainable goals by generating employment without negatively affecting the environment, then only the dream of real prosperous India be fulfilled.

**KEY WORDS:** Sustainable Development, Poverty, Employment.

India is still an agrarian economy where more than half of the population is depending on agricultural activities for survival and majority of its population still residing in villages, is counted among the countries with varied income level, varied standard of living, fluctuating literacy rates, and with only 2% of its total workforce to be skilled. Therefore it is very important for a nation like India to come up with a plan that not only addresses to the problem of literate urban unemployed youth but also deals with the problems of illiterate unemployed rural youth.

Generating rural sustainable employment opportunities through skill development could be done by addressing the problem of low income group who suffer from the problem of poverty, less education or literacy, low awareness and training etc. These employment opportunities are not only means of earning income for them but also holds a cultural significance. Considering their traditional understanding and knowhow it is important to provide them skill, training and understanding in utilizing nature and natural resources sustainably to generate employment and preserve nature for ensuring their survival. It will serve the dual purpose of generating income by providing employment opportunities by enhancing and developing skill for utilizing the natural and local resources without damaging the environment. For this it is extremely important to build the social bonds and community relations which will shatter down the isolation of the poor and build up a linkage for earning income and sharing knowledge. It will not only generate human assets but also develop marketable skills and allow the low income group to obtain employment through skill development that will help them to retain employment and earning. This will further improve their economic condition that will affect their health positively and also help to address the problem of poverty.

Sustainable livelihood opportunities could also be created through a combination of various activities or various sources of income like agriculture and other allied activities, livestock husbandry, small scale and handicraft units, small business units formed after obtaining certain training or household business set ups. The problem further worsens with greater dependency of agriculture on monsoon, use of traditional agricultural tools and practices, diverse rain patterns, increasing water scarcity and areas frequently facing droughts, increasing debts and increasing suicidal incidences of farmers. All these challenges make the life of a farm worker more difficult to sustain their living by depending fully on agriculture for survival. Those who are still managing to survive on farm activities for earning their livelihood also have to face the problem of unemployment for a certain duration due to lean off agricultural season. The workforce has multiple reasons to migrate in search of jobs either permanently or seasonally. The problem further multiplies when these unemployed illiterate unskilled workforce manages hard to strive for their survival. Various efforts have been taken by the Government of India from time to time. During 1950's Community Development Programmes were launched keeping in view to develop self reliance and promoting the rural development through rural community and increased local institutional participation. The motive of this programme was to develop democratic decentralization, transfer of technology, increased peoples participation in local projects, and developing the idea of self help efforts. The idea of rural development, employment generation and alleviating poverty remained the main agenda of planning even through the era of 60's but despite of remarkable

growth rate achieved by our country the problem of rural poverty, rural employment and rural development remained and still persist in the major problems of Indian economy. Various rural employment generating programmes were launched in later years to address the problem of rural employment, rural poverty and rural development. These programmes mainly focused to provide with adequate additional earning to the workers of farm sector that could be sufficient to support them during the lean off agricultural season. Various rural employment generating programmes that were launched were Small Farmers Development agency (1971), National Rural Employment Programme (1980), Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (1983) TRYSEM and IRDP (1978-79) MGNREGA (2005).

The above mentioned programme only addressed the short term objective of generating employment and raising income to solve the problem of poverty. None of these programmes raised the potential of working population by providing them proper skill or training so that the efficiency of work force could be raised permanently and they should not wait for any Messiah policy or programme to help them out when needed. India being the second most populous economy of the world owns a huge percentage of human resource out of which majority are in the working population age group and a large portion residing in the rural areas having their own set of issues and challenges needs a long term planning to address the issue of unemployment, poverty and development. The solution should come as a permanent one that can lead to increase the productivity of labour force. This could only be achieved by incorporating programmes like-improving education, providing training and skill, proper health care, developing a conducive socio-economic and political set up etc, then only the huge reservoir of human resource could be converted into human capital.

## OBJECTIVES:

1. To study the process of generating livelihood in rural areas of India through skill development.
2. To analyze the features of various skill development programmes in generating rural sustainable development.

## METHODOLOGY:

The present paper is based on secondary data and depends on the survey of various governmental reports and literature and scholarly articles published in Journals and other sources like, 'Ministry of Human Resource and Development' etc. that are relevant to the study.

India is considered to be a country with youngest population as India has 54% of its population below 25 years with 459 million of total working population in the world. It is a high time to realize the importance of training and skill development in the nation. There are various departments in the country that are providing vocational training and certificate courses to promote skill development in India. They are :

- (a) Health and Family Welfare
- (b) Human resource Development

- (c) Information Technology
- (d) Micro Small and Medium Enterprises
- (e) Tourism
- (f) Urban Development
- (g) Urban Employment and Poverty alleviation
- (h) Agro and Rural Industries
- (i) Agriculture
- (j) Textiles
- (k) Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises
- (l) Food Processing Industries
- (m) Rural Development
- (n) Social Justice and Empowerment
- (o) Tribal Affairs
- (p) Women and Child Development

Various advisory bodies have been appointed by Central Government to promote Skill Development in the Nation. They are :

- Central Apprenticeship Council (CAC)
- National Council for Vocational Training (NCVT)
- State Apprenticeship Council (SAC)
- State Government
- State Council for Vocational Training

India has set a target to skilled 500 million people by 2022 ( National Skill Deelopment Policy 2009,p.2). The best possible way to enjoy the demographic dividend is to skill India which will increase the productivity of the nation and also reduce the shortage of skilled labour force throughout the world. The Government of India has already initiated the programme of skill development at wide basis. A prime Minister's Council on Skill Development has already been set up to direct the policy and is supported by the National Skill Development Coordination Board ( NSDCB). The skill development initiatives undertaken by the private sector is promoted by the National Skill Development Corporation ( NSDC).

#### **Rural Sustainable Development through Skill Development by Generating Rural Livelihood Opportunities:**

The Ministry of Rural Development has launched a programme named 'AAJEEVIKA- National Rural Livelihood Mission ( NRLM). The programme was launched in June 2011, this programme is obtaining its funding support through World Bank. This programme aims to provide and create efficient and working institutional platforms for the rural poor so that they can increase their income through sustainable livelihood mission and improved working capacity. NRLM has targeted to cover almost 7 crore rural poor households across 600 districts, 600 blocks, 2.5 lakh gram panchayats and 6 lakh villages in the nation through Self managed , self helped groups ( SHG's) and also support them for earning livelihood for the period of 8-10 years.

NRLM focuses on building the innate qualities and capabilities of the rural poor and also enhances their capacity by providing them with information, knowledge, skills, tools, finance and collectivization that help them to participate in the nation building. It works on three pillars- it helps in enhancing and expanding existing livelihoods options of the rural poor by providing them skill training to make them ready for the job market, nurturing the idea of developing self employment, and developing entrepreneurship

Aajeevika Skill Development Programme ( ASDP) which is a sub mission of the NRLM programme is also working out with the objective to (1) Serve the occupational aspirations of the rural youth who are poor (2) To diversify incomes of the rural poor.

The programme ASDP provides an opportunity to the youths of rural poor to upgrade their skills and increase their efficiency and enter the skilled workforce of the nation. The training programmes and placement schemes are done through partnership between public , private, non governmental and community organizations. The target of this scheme is to skill and provide placement to 50 lakhs youth in the formal sector by 2017.

These schemes are giving outstanding outcomes highlighting the reservoir of talent hidden in the rural parts of our country. It has led to develop a micro entrepreneurial class in the rural economy that are undertaking various tasks like, providing services in education, dairy farming, livestock, handicrafts etc. This is not only enhancing their traditional work but also providing them with new advanced skilled ideas to make their traditional basic ideas a brilliant innovative plan. These micro entrepreneurs are needed to be guided , trained and supported from time to time so that their full potential could be exploited.

#### **CONCLUSION :**

To develop the nation as a whole it is very important to realize that India cannot develop without its rural development not taken into proper consideration. The benefits of growth and development is needed to trickle down to the grass route level and without watering the roots of the nation it is not possible to reap the fruits of success in real sense. There is a need for sustainable rural development in India as Poverty dominates in the rural economy with majority of poor living in the rural areas. Poverty is the main reason that affects the standard of living , quantity and quality of food and poor and degrading environmental scenario in the state and in the area specific. When we talk about sustainable rural development it is well understood that the agenda of economic development by employment generation through sustainable opportunities that not only serve the needs of present generation but also consider the needs of future generation as well. Several efforts have been taken from time to time to highlight and realize the importance of sustainable development through programmes at global national and state level stressing on the need of upgrading the economy, promoting equality of opportunity income and development for all on one hand and keeping in mind the need of future generation and environmental concern on the other hand.

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